

## 15.000

SOURCE: 62 FR 51230, Sept. 30, 1997, unless otherwise noted.

### 15.000 Scope of part.

This part prescribes policies and procedures governing competitive and noncompetitive negotiated acquisitions. A contract awarded using other than sealed bidding procedures is a negotiated contract (see 14.101).

#### 15.001 Definitions.

As used in this part—

*Deficiency* is a material failure of a proposal to meet a Government requirement or a combination of significant weaknesses in a proposal that increases the risk of unsuccessful contract performance to an unacceptable level.

*Proposal modification* is a change made to a proposal before the solicitation closing date and time, or made in response to an amendment, or made to correct a mistake at any time before award.

*Proposal revision* is a change to a proposal made after the solicitation closing date, at the request of or as allowed by a contracting officer, as the result of negotiations.

*Weakness* means a flaw in the proposal that increases the risk of unsuccessful contract performance. A “significant weakness” in the proposal is a flaw that appreciably increases the risk of unsuccessful contract performance.

[62 FR 51230, Sept. 30, 1997, as amended at 66 FR 2129, Jan. 10, 2001]

#### 15.002 Types of negotiated acquisition.

(a) *Sole source acquisitions.* When contracting in a sole source environment, the request for proposals (RFP) should be tailored to remove unnecessary information and requirements; e.g., evaluation criteria and voluminous proposal preparation instructions.

(b) *Competitive acquisitions.* When contracting in a competitive environment, the procedures of this part are intended to minimize the complexity of the solicitation, the evaluation, and the source selection decision, while maintaining a process designed to foster an impartial and comprehensive evaluation of offerors’ proposals, leading to selection of the proposal representing

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the best value to the Government (see 2.101).

### Subpart 15.1—Source Selection Processes and Techniques

#### 15.100 Scope of subpart.

This subpart describes some of the acquisition processes and techniques that may be used to design competitive acquisition strategies suitable for the specific circumstances of the acquisition.

#### 15.101 Best value continuum.

An agency can obtain best value in negotiated acquisitions by using any one or a combination of source selection approaches. In different types of acquisitions, the relative importance of cost or price may vary. For example, in acquisitions where the requirement is clearly definable and the risk of unsuccessful contract performance is minimal, cost or price may play a dominant role in source selection. The less definitive the requirement, the more development work required, or the greater the performance risk, the more technical or past performance considerations may play a dominant role in source selection.

##### 15.101–1 Tradeoff process.

(a) A tradeoff process is appropriate when it may be in the best interest of the Government to consider award to other than the lowest priced offeror or other than the highest technically rated offeror.

(b) When using a tradeoff process, the following apply:

(1) All evaluation factors and significant subfactors that will affect contract award and their relative importance shall be clearly stated in the solicitation; and

(2) The solicitation shall state whether all evaluation factors other than cost or price, when combined, are significantly more important than, approximately equal to, or significantly less important than cost or price.

(c) This process permits tradeoffs among cost or price and non-cost factors and allows the Government to accept other than the lowest priced proposal. The perceived benefits of the higher priced proposal shall merit the